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GRENADA: Prospects for an Interim Government

Governor General Scoon—in coordination with US Embassy and Caribbean leaders—is attempting to restore stability. Meanwhile, exiles and remnants of the People's Revolutionary government are maneuvering to affect the development of a new political system.

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Scoon has reestablished the constitution, which was suspended by the Bishop regime, and has promised to announce an interim government within a week, with elections to be held within one year. According to the US Mission in Geneva, Grenadian-born UN official Alistair McIntyre was to travel to Grenada yesterday to consult with Scoon on his role in a provisional government.

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Members of the moderate Grenada Democratic Movement, based primarily in Trinidad and Tobago and the US, have begun preparations for elections.

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Comment: Members of the Grenada Democratic Movement appear to be the main contenders for power, but the emergence of other individuals and groups could lead to the need for political coalitions. While the Movement appears to have developed a comprehensive campaign strategy, the exiles may have trouble initially reviving democratic principles among the population.

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The unknown whereabouts of some former government and party members—as well as possible future activities of any radicals loyal to former Deputy Prime Minister Coard or Revolutionary Council leader Austin—raise concern about prospects for stability. Many members of the Grenadian armed forces apparently put on civilian clothes to avoid being captured last week, and they may attempt to foment opposition to an interim government's moves to establish democracy.

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British Involvement

The US Embassy in London reports the British are pleased with the steps taken by Scoon. Prime Minister Thatcher has instructed the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to respond positively to requests from Scoon and the interim government. The British already have offered Scoon a three-member development team from Barbados, a regional police adviser, and monetary assistance on an emergency basis. [REDACTED]

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The UK would prefer to provide behind-the-scenes advice and assistance, skilled personnel, and economic aid, according to the Foreign Office. London does not want to take the lead in forming a peacekeeping force and has reservations about contributing a military contingent. The Foreign Office, however, is inclined to support efforts to build an effective Grenadian police force. [REDACTED]

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Comment: British aid to Grenada—if it steers clear of military involvement—is likely to be noncontroversial in the UK. Thatcher probably hopes that such aid will help repair London's tarnished image among some of the members of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States. [REDACTED]

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NATO: Concern About MBFR Talks

Some Allies are becoming increasingly restive over US reluctance to match recent Soviet concessions on MBFR during the current negotiating round. []

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The Soviets have been moving closer to the Western position on verification measures. At a press conference last Friday, marking the 10th anniversary of the negotiations, the Soviet spokesman called on the West to respond promptly and constructively to the East's concessions. []

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West German and Dutch officials are concerned that unless the US responds, Moscow will have improved its position in the campaign for West European public opinion on arms control issues. They view progress on MBFR as especially important in light of the stalemate at the INF talks and START. []

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Comment: Certain of the other Allies probably share the West German and Dutch sentiments. With INF deployments beginning next month, they view the MBFR talks as offering an opportunity to underscore US and Allied commitment to arms control. []

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The Allies believe the West would secure tactical advantage if the US were to advance new proposals in Vienna soon. In their view, a new Western proposal on the table would place responsibility for thwarting a possible agreement on the Soviets' shoulders in case Moscow boycotts the MBFR negotiations when INF deployments begin. []

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EL SALVADOR: Guerrillas Keep Up Pressure

The insurgents are continuing their intermittent attacks on government forces in eastern and central El Salvador, and the Army last week conducted a sweep operation northeast of the capital.

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[redacted] the defense attache reports that representatives of the two largest guerrilla factions—the People's Revolutionary Army and the Popular Liberation Forces—met late last month and agreed on additional joint operations. Army leaders reportedly are concerned about possible dynamite attacks on bridges, dams, and military installations. [redacted]

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The Army sweep operation in the Guazapa area was of short duration. The defense attache reports that patrols went into the area in advance of the operation and killed some 37 guerrillas. The Army, meanwhile, has recently received 12 105-mm US howitzers that are to be integrated into existing batteries in about a month. [redacted]

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Comment: The guerrillas continue to overrun isolated garrisons and make effective use of ambushes on relief forces. The Army has demonstrated a persistent inability to provide rapid assistance to besieged units or to counter insurgent ambush tactics. [redacted]

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CHINA-US: Interest in Antitank Missiles

Beijing has informed US Embassy officials that it wants to buy the production technology for an advanced version of the US TOW antitank guided missile. [REDACTED]

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Chinese officials say that the TOW project has "top priority" and that they consider the request a test of recent guidelines on the transfer of advanced US military technology to China. The officials insist that China will not proceed on other arms requests until an agreement is concluded for the TOW. [REDACTED]

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The Chinese reportedly realize they are unlikely to receive US approval to buy their first choice—the third-generation TOW, which has just entered production. They are seeking instead a second-generation TOW modified for greater range. Beijing stresses that negotiations with the manufacturer—scheduled for next month—will eventually lead to the transfer of production technology to China but may initially entail an outright purchase of some missiles. [REDACTED]

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Comment: The Chinese are eager to demonstrate new movement in military relations with the US. They probably believe the improved second-generation TOW falls within the category of antitank and air defense weapons that Secretary of Defense Weinberger, on his recent trip to Beijing, announced the US was willing to sell China. By not insisting on the newest TOW, the Chinese have softened their earlier insistence on buying only the most advanced US weapon technology. [REDACTED]

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Advanced versions of the TOW would markedly improve China's capabilities to combat Soviet armor along the Sino-Soviet border and in Mongolia. The missile China is seeking would have a significantly greater range, almost double the armor penetration, and far greater accuracy than China's current antitank missile, a domestic copy of the Soviet Sagger. The new missile could be particularly effective against heavily armored T-72 tanks, which are beginning to be deployed with Soviet forces in the border area. [REDACTED]

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NICARAGUA: Reducing Vulnerability of Port

The Sandinistas have announced they are rebuilding a 300-meter stone causeway to carry road and rail traffic from the key Pacific port of Corinto to the mainland. The government also says it will begin this month to relocate 538 families from Corinto to the mainland to protect them from further insurgent attacks on the fuel storage facilities at the port. In addition, Managua reportedly is considering reopening the inactive Masachapa oil terminal for offloading and storage of petroleum products. [REDACTED]

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Comment: A road bridge has been the only link from Corinto to the mainland since floods washed out a railroad causeway in May 1982. The bridge, an economic chokepoint, has been the target of attempted sabotage. Reconstruction of the causeway has long been planned as part of the Cuban-assisted renovation of Nicaragua's railroads, but the project recently has assumed new urgency and is scheduled for completion in three months. The Sandinistas earlier had announced plans to relocate all 23,000 Corinto residents, presumably for propaganda purposes, but the prohibitive cost is likely to limit the move. [REDACTED]

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LEBANON: Gemayel To Seek Israeli Withdrawal

The national reconciliation conference yesterday asked President Gemayel to go to Washington to seek US help in procuring the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon, according to press reports. The conferees plan to meet today to consider cease-fire violations, but they reportedly will suspend discussion of political reforms until Gemayel returns. [REDACTED]

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Comment: The government and the opposition have probably agreed to Gemayel's trip to avoid being blamed for the failure of the talks. Gemayel almost certainly hopes that, by evading opposition demands for the complete abrogation of the Lebanese-Israeli accord, he can buy time for his government. Syrian-backed opposition leaders, however, do not believe that Gemayel will be able to negotiate a new formula for an Israeli withdrawal, and they may be preparing to resume fighting to put additional pressure on the government. [REDACTED]

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EC: Parliamentary Debate on INF

The European Parliament will debate the INF issue on 15 and 16 November at the request of the West German Social Democrats, who probably are seeking to highlight opposition to deployment. A Danish Liberal has introduced a resolution that endorses NATO's dual policy of support for arms control negotiations while maintaining military strength. It avoids specific mention of INF. He told US officials that he believes the resolution will pass because it has the backing of the four center-right groupings in the Parliament. [REDACTED]

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Comment: The center-right parties have a majority in the Parliament and are likely to secure easy passage of the resolution despite criticism from some leftist members. Some Dutch Christian Democrats may abstain, but most French and Italian Socialists probably will either support the motion or not vote. Because the European Parliament is popularly elected, a positive vote could help refute Soviet and peace movement claims of a West European consensus against INF deployment. [REDACTED]

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USSR: New Leader of Uzbek Republic

Inamzhon Usmankhodzhaev was appointed party leader of the Uzbek Republic yesterday, succeeding Sharaf Rashidov, who died earlier this week. Usmankhodzhaev, 53, is a native Uzbek construction specialist who rose rapidly through party ranks, served a four-year tour in the personnel department of the Central Committee in Moscow, and has been chairman of the Presidium of the Uzbek Supreme Soviet since 1978. [REDACTED]

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Comment: Usmankhodzhaev, who is not known to have any direct ties with General Secretary Andropov, may eventually be given a seat on the Politburo as a candidate member like his predecessor. He seems suited to provide the type of vigorous party leadership—including the purging of corrupt officials—displayed in recent years in the neighboring Republics of Azerbaydzhan and Georgia. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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HUNGARY: Tougher Policy on Dissent

A senior government official has told the US Embassy in Budapest that the regime has shown reduced tolerance of dissent in recent months. He says this is an effort to appease the Soviets at a time of increasing East-West tensions and to prevent a "Solidarity-type" opposition from developing as economic problems continue. He said the decision to tighten up was made after prolonged debate and implied the policy will ease if the economy and the international political climate improve. The recent firing of a liberal editor and police harassment of prominent dissidents have provoked considerable protest among intellectuals. []

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Comment: Authorities expect limited restrictions to be enough to reduce internal criticism of the regime and to rein in the relatively free-wheeling press. They are, however, probably prepared to resort to tougher policies to preserve control and placate Moscow. They will try to limit damage done by this harder line—to public opinion and to Hungary's liberal reputation in the West—by avoiding any rash actions and by keeping lines of communication with the West open.

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ROMANIA: Strike at Factory

A US Embassy source says 1,200 workers in a factory in northern Romania went on strike for two days early last month to protest an increase in their working hours. The workers reportedly marched on the local police station to protest the arrest of their strike leaders and were dispersed only after the intervention of militia and security troops armed with machineguns and water cannon. The government subsequently rescinded the lengthening of the work hours and fired the factory director. []

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Comment: This is the first major strike that has been reported outside the traditionally militant mining area in more than a year. Despite the regime's show of force, its apparent acquiescence in the workers' demarche risks emboldening other workers to take strike action. []

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SOUTH AFRICA: Referendum Victory

Prime Minister Botha is likely to interpret the strong approval of the new constitution in the referendum among South African whites on Wednesday as a mandate for his gradual approach to reform. The constitution, which would grant limited political rights to Coloreds and Indians, received "yes" votes of 66 percent and won support in 14 of 15 electoral districts. Some 76 percent of the 2.7 million eligible voters participated.

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Comment: The results reflect the evolution of the ruling Nationalists into a powerful centrist party that has little to fear from the left. Moreover, by overcoming the opposition of rightwing parties, Botha strengthens his position in the divided Afrikaner community. The size of the victory also may lead to increased support for the new constitution among Indians and Coloreds, who are tentatively scheduled to elect representatives to separate chambers in Parliament next spring. Even if large numbers boycott those elections, as expected, Botha probably will move to put the new constitution into effect while working to mend rifts among Afrikaners.

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Special Analysis

TURKEY: The General Election

The legislative election Sunday will mark the end of direct military rule and the beginning of a transition to democracy. The ruling generals, however, clearly plan on retaining a large political role behind the scenes for the indefinite future. The military council of President Evren and the four service chiefs has given its tacit support to the Nationalist Democracy Party, probably ensuring its victory. The generals, who want a two-party system, have also unofficially endorsed Necdet Calp's Populist Party as the "opposition," but have not blocked the emergence of the Motherland Party. The new parliament is almost certain to be solidly conservative, giving Evren virtual carte blanche to continue the policies of the military regime.

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The election campaign has attracted little public interest. Apathy probably stems in part from the heavy restrictions the ruling generals have imposed on what the candidates do and say. Moreover, there are no major policy differences among the three parties.

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The ruling generals also have barred from politics former party leaders, such as ex-Justice Party chief Demirel and former Republican People's Party head Ecevit. This has deprived the electorate of familiar faces and political symbols. The voters have had little time to become familiar with the new political groups that have been permitted to enter the election.

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Possible Outcomes

The voter turnout nevertheless will be heavy. Nonvoters are subject to a fine. In addition, Ankara is likely to direct local officials to get out the sizable rural vote.

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Much of the rural population reportedly likes what the generals have done, and getting these voters to the polls probably will give the military-backed National Democrats a plurality, if not a majority. The National Democrats would do even better if Evren endorses the party publicly at the last minute.

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The Motherland Party, led by former economic chief Turgut Ozal, is likely to come in a strong second. The Populists may only attain the 10-percent minimum vote necessary to win seats in parliament.

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There is a small chance that the Motherland Party will equal or better the National Democrats' vote. The National Democrats' party leader, Turgut Sunalp, is generally regarded as too inflexible and too inexperienced to be effective on a national level. The commitment of Evren, and by extension the National Democrats, to secularism has pushed some traditionally conservative, religious elements toward the Motherland Party. [REDACTED]

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The New Government

Evren will remain firmly in charge, regardless of the outcome. Under the constitution adopted last year, the president has extensive powers, including the right to appoint the prime minister. There is considerable evidence that Evren wants to stick with incumbent Prime Minister Ulu. [REDACTED]

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The President would probably try to mollify Sunalp, if the National Democrats come out on top, by making him chairman of the National Assembly, a largely ceremonial post but technically next in line to the presidency. If the Motherland Party does well, Evren might try to bring in Ozal as deputy prime minister. [REDACTED]

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Policies

The President—with the members of the military council staying on in an advisory capacity—is likely to have little trouble in continuing the policies of the military regime. He already has announced his intention to maintain martial law at least until the threat of renewed terrorism subsides. Both the Motherland Party and the National Democrats, moreover, have committed themselves to maintaining the market-oriented, outward-looking economic policies adopted in 1980. [REDACTED]

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The new government is also likely to pursue the pro-US foreign policy of the past three years. The President is staunchly pro-Western and secular, and he sees no alternative to Turkey's political and military ties to the West. [REDACTED]

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In contrast, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe has passed a resolution condemning the election as undemocratic. Deep-seated suspicions therefore will make it difficult for Evren to ameliorate relations with Western Europe. [REDACTED]

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